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MYSTERIES

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10¢



JAN. 1954
No. 5



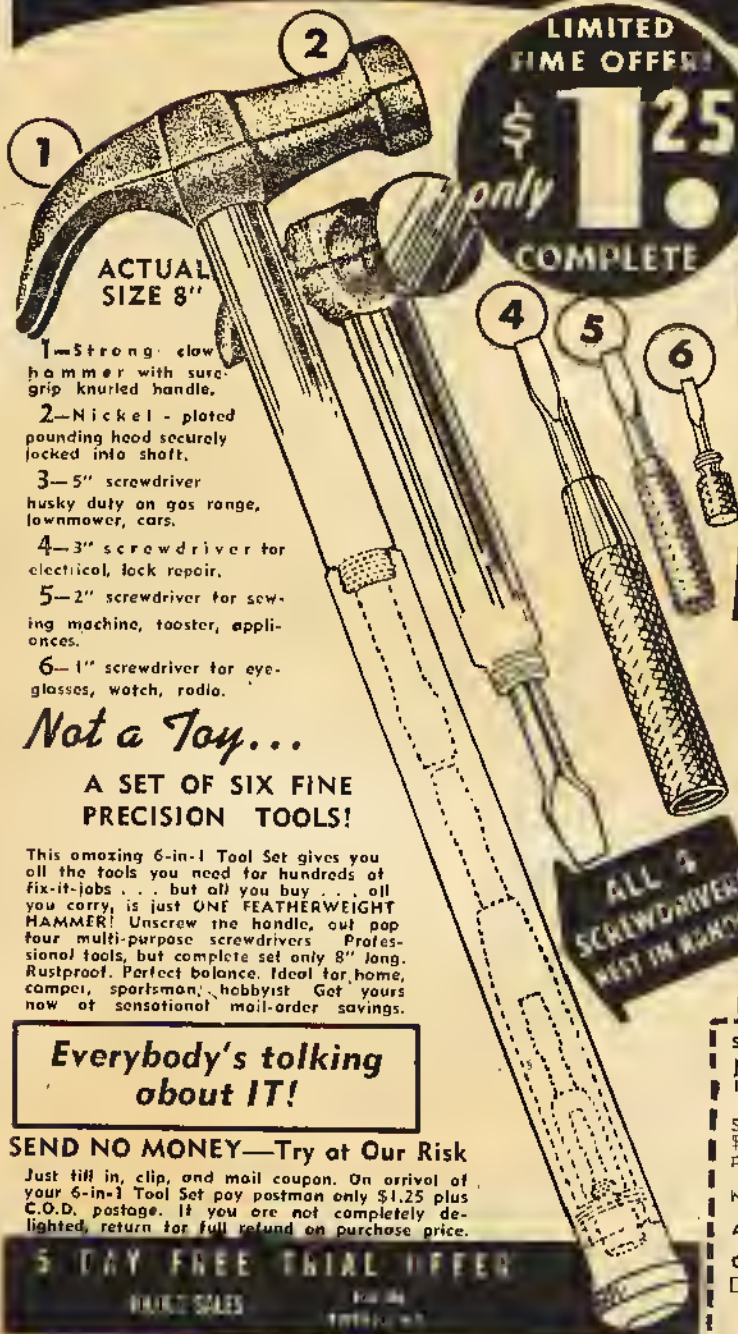
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TRAPPED in the TOMB

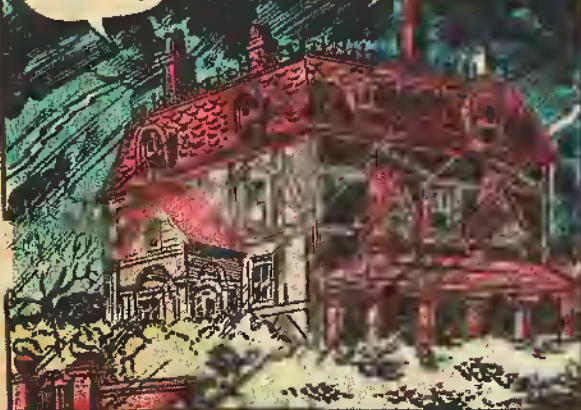
BY GREED THEY LIVED—AND BY GREED THEY DIED! ROLL UP A COFFIN, FIEND, AND LISTEN TO A BONE CHILLING STORY ABOUT A FABULOUS STONE—AND WE DON'T MEAN A TOMBSTONE—THAT SHAPED THE LIVES, AND DEATHS, OF EVERYBODY WHO CAME IN CONTACT WITH IT! IT'S ALL HERE! GREED, LUST, HATE, REVENGE! FOR THIS IS THE TALE OF THE TWO WEIRD SISTERS...



THE STORY STARTS ONE STORMY NIGHT AS TERESA TOMPKINS, AGE NINETY, LIES DYING...

HOW MUCH LONGER HAS SHE GOT, DOCTOR?

YOUR SISTER WILL GO ANY MINUTE NOW, MISS DORTHEA!



AND DEATH ALONE CAN SEPERATE TERESA AND DORTHEA TOMPKINS, IDENTICAL TWINS...

D-DORTHEA! ARE—YOU—HERE? I—DYING—YOU KNOW—WHAT...

YES, SISTER DEAR, I'M HERE! AND I KNOW—YOU WANT THE **YELLOW STAR**! I'LL GET IT FOR YOU!

BETTER HURRY!



DORTHEA TOMPKINS OPENS A SMALL WALL-SAFE...

YES—I—WANT—THE—
STAR!

SHE HASN'T
GOT LONG, MISS
DORTHEA!

I'M GETTING
IT, SISTER,
DEAR! JUST ONE
MOMENT!

THE—STAR!
H—HOW I
LOVE IT! ALL—
THAT'S LEFT!
M—MUST—BE—
BURIED—WITH
ME!

YES, TERESA! WE
ALL UNDERSTAND
WHAT YOU WANT
DONE! THE STONE
WILL BE BURIED
WITH YOU!

ALL—I—EVER—HAD!
A—GIFT—FROM—HIM!
FROM CAPTAIN JOHN! JOHN!
I'LL BE—WITH—YOU—
SOON—AGHHHHHH—

SHE'S GONE! BUT
WHO WAS CAPTAIN
JOHN, MISS
DORTHEA?

JOHN BURTON! A SEA
CAPTAIN WE KNEW LONG
AGO! HE GAVE HER THE
STAR ONCE WHEN HE
RETURNED FROM A
VOYAGE TO CHINA!

THEY WERE TO BE MARRIED,
BUT, WELL, SOMETHING HAPPENED!
SO JOHN WENT AWAY AND WAS
LOST IN A STORM AT SEA! WE'VE
BEEN TOGETHER EVER SINCE!

MAYBE
SHE WILL
SEE HIM
SOON!
WHO CAN
TELL?

INTRODUCING RONALD TOMPKINS, SCAPE-
GRACE NEPHEW OF THE TWO OLD LADIES,
WHO AT THE MOMENT IS VERY PLEASED
WITH HIMSELF...

POOR FOOLISH OLD
LADY! DID SHE REALLY—(CHUCKLE)—THINK
I WOULD LET THEM BURY THE STAR WITH
HER! HAH-HAH! LET THEM BURY THE
PASTE SUBSTITUTE I PLANTED IN
THE SAFE MONTHS
AGO! I'LL KEEP
THE REAL
STAR!

SO FAR—SO BAD! BUT SOMEBODY ELSE WANTS TO GET INTO THE ACT! NEXT DAY IN A CERTAIN DINGY MOTEL...

YOU SEEN THE PAPER, HYPE? NOW WHAT DO WE DO?

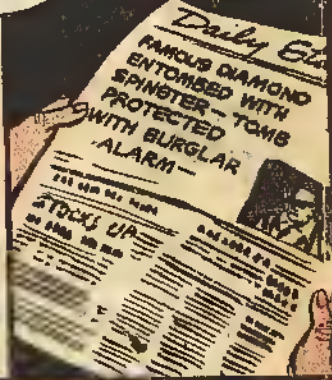
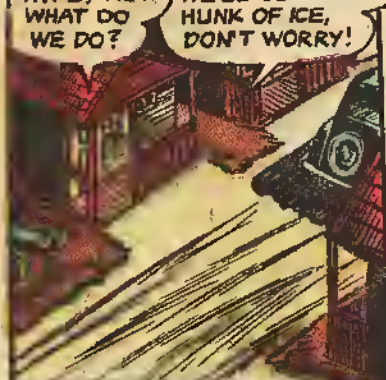
YEAH, I SEEN IT! BUT I GOT PLANS! WE'LL GET THAT HUNK OF ICE, DON'T WORRY!

HYPE INGERSOLL AND HIS MOLL, FLO, MAKE THEIR PLANS...

THIS'LL BE THE FIRST TIME I EVER HAD TO CRACK A TOMB TO GET A ROCK! BUT I CAN DO IT!

I DUNNO, HYPE! I DON'T LIKE THIS IDEA OF STEALING ANYTHING OFF DEAD BOOIES!

HEH-HEH—THERE NEVER WAS A BURGLAR ALARM THAT OLD HYPE COULDN'T GIMMICK! WE'LL GET THE STAR OKAY!



MEANTIME, THE NEPHEW, RONALD TOMPKINS, GETS A RUDE SHOCK...

HURRY UP, CAN'T YOU? I JUST WANT THE APPROXIMATE VALUE—IT MUST BE WORTH AT LEAST TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND!

YOU KIDDING ME, BUDDY?



THIS THING IS PASTE! JUST A GOOD IMITATION! I'LL GIVE YOU FIFTY BUCKS FOR IT!

W-WHAT! YOU MUST BE MISTAKEN! IT CAN'T BE...



BUT RONALD IS FINALLY CONVINCED...

PASTE! I'VE BEEN BILKED! THE OLD FOOL MUST HAVE GUESSED THAT I WAS AFTER THE STONE AND SHE SUBSTITUTED A PASTE DIAMOND, TOO! BUT THAT MEANS...

... THAT THE REAL STAR WAS BURIED WITH HER AFTER ALL! IT'S IN THERE NOW, IN THE TOMB, AROUND HER SCRAWNY NECK! BUT I'LL GET IT!



SO THAT NIGHT ALL ROADS LEAD TO—
THE GRAVEYARD...

I STILL DON'T LIKE THIS, HYPE! SUPPOSE
THAT BURGLAR ALARM GOES OFF? EVERY
COP IN TOWN WILL BE OUT HERE!

CUT IT OUT, WILL YA! I KNOW
MY STUFF! I'LL PUT THAT
ALARM OUT OF BUSINESS
IN NO TIME!

WHEN I GET
THROUGH WITH
THIS THING,
IT'LL TAKE A
WEEK TO GET
IT BACK IN
SHAPE!

AND SOON...

THERE, WHAT'O
I TELL YA! THE
ALARM'S JIMMIED!
NOW ALL WE DO
IS GRAB THE
STAR AND BEAT
IT!

LET'S GET IT
OVER WITH,
THEN! THIS
PLACE IS
GIVING ME
THE WILLIES!



MOMENTS LATER...

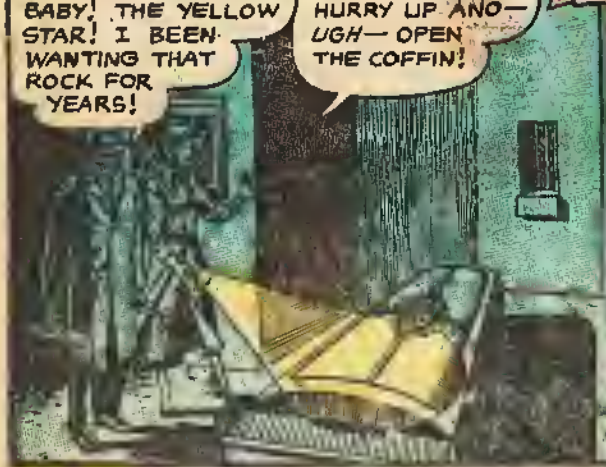
WON'T BE LONG NOW,
BABY! THE YELLOW
STAR! I BEEN
WANTING THAT
ROCK FOR
YEARS!

BRRRR—IT'S
COLD IN HERE!
HURRY UP AND—
UGH— OPEN
THE COFFIN!

THE COFFIN LID
COMES OFF
EASILY ENOUGH...

BROTHER! LOOK AT
IT! AND IT'S ALL
OURS!

WILL
YOU HURRY
UP! I GOT THE
SCREAMING
MEEMIES!



BUT...

DON'T TOUCH IT!
PUT YOUR HANDS
UP!

HLH!

W—WHO
ARE YOU?



WELL, MASTER-
BRAIN... WHO IS
HE? YOU'RE THE
ONE WHO FIGURED
OUT ALL THE
ANGLES!

DON'T ASK ME!
I NEVER SAW
HIM BEFORE!



I'M THE MAN WHO'S GOING TO GET THE STAR!
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE AND I DON'T
THINK IT MATTERS MUCH! NATURALLY, I'LL
HAVE TO KILL YOU BOTH! YOU WOULD
NEVER LET ME LIVE IN PEACE
IF I LET YOU GO!

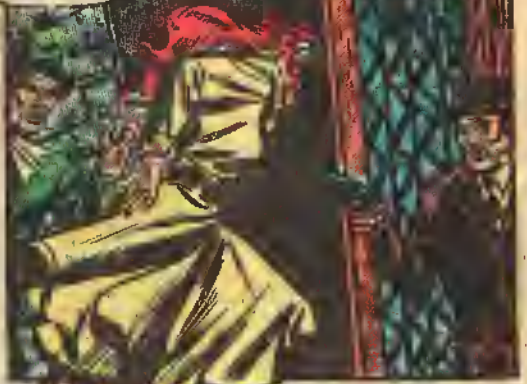


FLO, TERROR-STRICKEN, TRIES TO
JUMP THE GUN...

FLO!
DON'T! HE'LL
KILL YOU!

NO YOU DON'T, YOU
DIRTY...

GET
BACK!
I'LL
SHOOT!



FLO WAS GOING TO MATCH WILD AMBITION
AGAINST A GUN... A FOOLISH RISK, FOR
DEATH TRAVELS AS FAST AS A BULLET...
SHE ONLY HAD TIME FOR A SINGLE
SCREAM...



I WARNED YOU! I
WASN'T KIDDING!

EEEEEEEEEE--



FLO! FLO, BABY!
YOU DIRTY
MURDERER,
YOU KILLED
HER!

OF COURSE!
AND NOW...



FLO, I—
GAAAAAAA—

... THAT TAKES
CARE OF YOU!
AND THANKS
FOR JIMMYING
THE BURGLAR
ALARM! I WAS
WORRIED
ABOUT THAT!





VERY NEAT! IT'LL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE ANYBODY FINDS THEM IN HERE! AND BY THE TIME THEY DO—I'LL BE IN SOUTH AMERICA WITH THE STAR!



NOW, YOU UGLY OLD CRONE, I'M GOING TO RIP THE STAR OFF YOUR SHRIVELED NECK! I MIGHT EVEN TWIST IT A LITTLE—I ALWAYS DID HATE YOU, AUNTIE, DEAR!

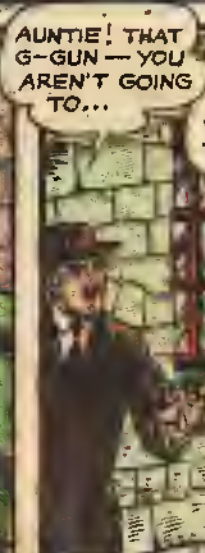


HIS HAND TREMBLED WITH GREED AS IT CLOSED AROUND THE JEWEL, BUT SUDDENLY IT FROZE, FOR...



NOT YET, RONALD... AND I ALWAYS HATED BOTH OF YOU, RONALD! AND DON'T TRY REACHING FOR THAT PISTOL!

AUNT DOROTHEA! S-BUT...



AUNTIE! THAT G-GUN—YOU AREN'T GOING TO...



KILL YOU, RONALD? OH, BUT I AM! JUST THE WAY YOU KILLED THOSE TWO ON THE FLOOR!



BUT FIRST I'M GOING TO TELL YOU A STORY, RONALD. ABOUT TERESA AND ME, THE TWINS THAT EVERYBODY THOUGHT ADORED EACH OTHER! BUT WE DIDN'T! WE HATED EACH OTHER LIKE POISON, AND FOR YEARS WE LIVED A LIE! YOU SEE, WE HAD A TERRIBLE SECRET, SISTER AND I...



...NO PAIN IN THE WORLD CAN MATCH THAT WHICH A WOMAN SUFFERS WHEN SHE LOVES A MAN WHO CARES FOR ANOTHER...



WE BOTH LOVED THE SAME MAN — SIXTY YEARS AGO! BUT HE GAVE *HER* THE STAR AND LAUGHED AT ME WHEN I TOLD HIM I COULDN'T LIVE WITHOUT HIM! BUT I SWORE I'D HAVE HIM!



AUNT DORTHEA! Y-YOU'RE INSANE!



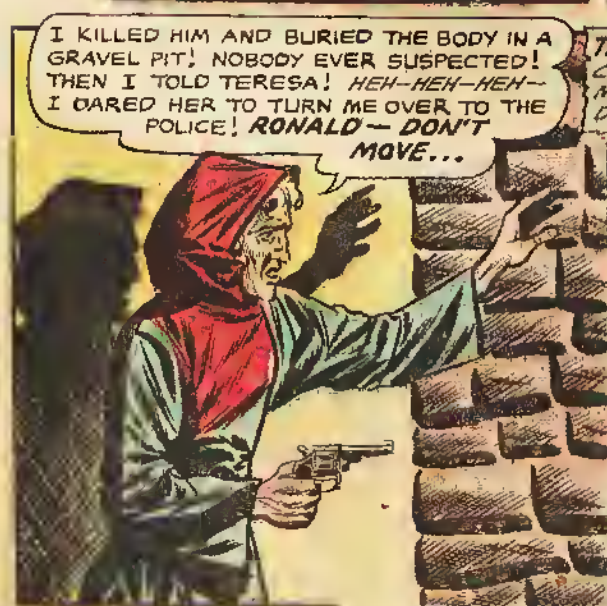
I WAITED UNTIL THEY WERE TO BE MARRIED, JOHN AND TERESA, THEN I LOCKED HER IN HER ROOM! I WENT TO THE CHURCH! JOHN COULDN'T TELL US APART AND—HE MARRIED *ME!*



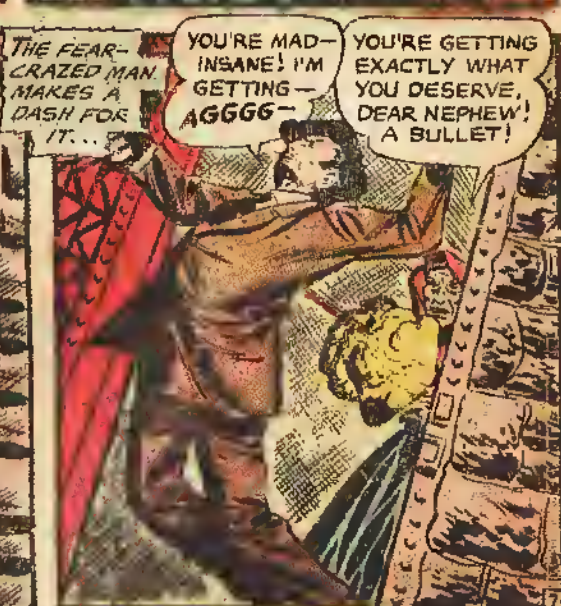
BUT SOMEHOW I GAVE MYSELF AWAY! THE FIRST DAY OF OUR HONEYMOON, JOHN FOUND OUT I WAS OORTHEA! HE WAS GOING TO LEAVE ME, GET A DIVORCE, AND MARRY *HER!* I WAS IN A RAGE...

W-WHAT DID YOU DO, AUNT DORTHEA?

WHILE SHE'S TALKING— IF I CAN MAKE IT TO THE DOOR...



I KILLED HIM AND BURIED THE BODY IN A GRAVEL PIT! NOBODY EVER SUSPECTED! THEN I TOLD TERESA! *HEH-HEH-HEH—* I DARED HER TO TURN ME OVER TO THE POLICE! *RONALD— DON'T MOVE...*



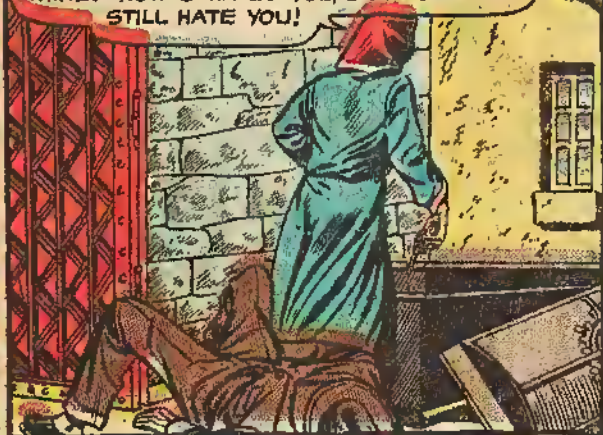
THE FEAR-CRAZED MAN MAKES A DASH FOR IT...

YOU'RE MAD— INSANE! I'M GETTING— AGGGG—

YOU'RE GETTING EXACTLY WHAT YOU DESERVE, DEAR NEPHEW! A BULLET!

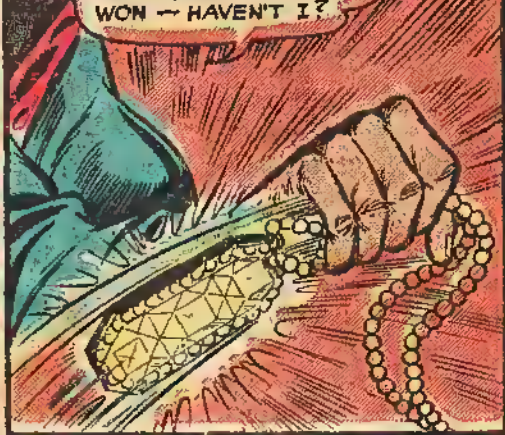
AND AS RONALD GASPS HIS LIFE AWAY...

NOW, TERESA, I'LL TAKE THE STAR! AT LAST I'LL GET WHAT SHOULD ALWAYS HAVE BEEN MINE! HOW I HATED YOU, SISTER! HOW I STILL HATE YOU!



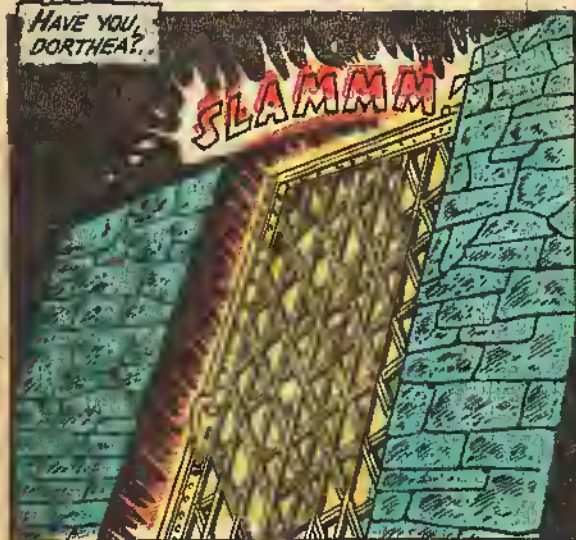
STRANGELY THE CORPSE SEEMS TO WEAR A MOCKING SMILE...

WHAT ARE YOU SMILING ABOUT, TERESA? I'VE WON — HAVEN'T I?



HAVE YOU, DORTHEA?

SLAMMM



THE O-DOG! I'M LOCKED IN! BUT NO — THERE MUST BE A WAY OUT! THERE MUST BE!



NO, DORTHEA! NO WAY OUT FOR YOU — EVER...

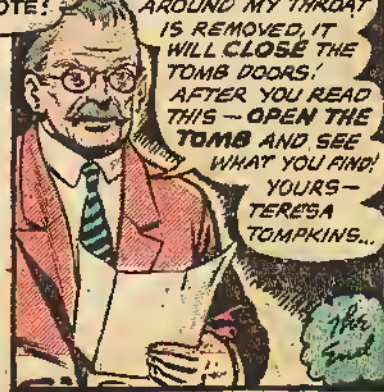
AHHHHH — I — CAN'T — BUOGE — IT! THE AIR — ALREADY GOING B-BAD! I — DIE — HELP — EEEEEEE —

SIX MONTHS LATER A LETTER IS OPENED IN THE OFFICE OF TERESA TOMPKINS' LAWYER...

HERE'S THE TOMPKINS' LETTER, MR. FROST! IT'S BEEN JUST SIX MONTHS SINCE SHE DIED!

OH, YES! HER INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO WAIT THAT LONG, THEN READ IT. HMMM — WONDER WHAT THE OLD LADY WROTE?

... THEY WILL BE AFTER THE STAR, I KNOW, BUT I SOLD IT LONG AGO! THE ONE YOU BURY WITH ME WILL BE ONLY PASTE! I HAVE SET A LITTLE TRAP FOR SOMEONE! IF THE PENDANT AROUND MY THROAT IS REMOVED, IT WILL CLOSE THE TOMB DOORS! AFTER YOU READ THIS — OPEN THE TOMB AND SEE WHAT YOU FIND! YOURS — TERESA TOMPKINS...



The DEADLY DOUBLE



THERE IS ONLY ONE THING WRONG WITH PLANNING A PERFECT MURDER—SOMETHING ALWAYS GOES WRONG! AND ONCE YOU GET STARTED KILLING, IT'S HARD TO STOP! TWO MURDERS ARE AS CHEAP AS ONE, BILL DEKKER FOUND OUT, AND AFTER ALL, THEY CAN ONLY HANG YOU ONCE! BUT EVEN THEN HE HAD A CHANCE, UNTIL HE STARTED SEEING GHOSTS, AND FOUND HIMSELF INVOLVED IN A WEIRD GAME OF DOUBLE OR NOTHING...

WHEN HE TOOK HIS WIFE RIDING THAT NIGHT, BILL DEKKER HAD MURDER ON HIS MIND...

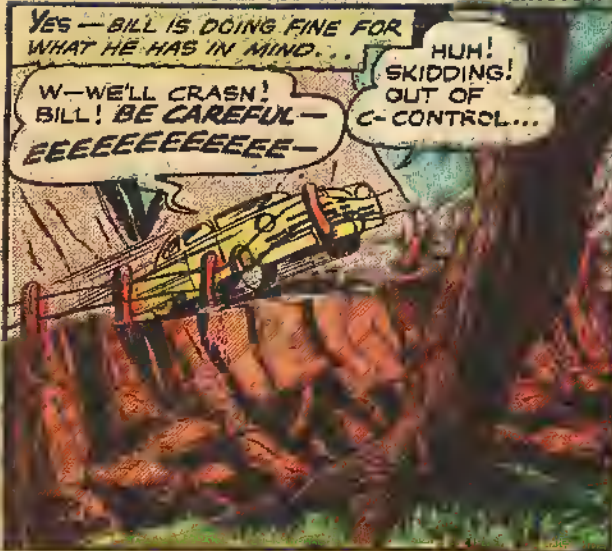
BILL! BE CAREFUL!
YOU'RE GOING TO
KILL US!

DON'T WORRY, ETHEL!
I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING!
I'M A GOOD—(HIC)—
DRIVER, AND YOU
KNOW IT!

BILL! PLEASE—
SLOW DOWN!
T—THERE'S A
DANGEROUS
CURVE AHEAD!

AWW—STOP
NAGGING! I
ONLY HAD A
COUPLE—(HIC)—
DRINKS! I'M
DOING ALL
RIGHT!





YES — BILL IS DOING FINE FOR WHAT HE HAS IN MIND...

W—WE'LL CRASH! BILL! BE CAREFUL—EEEEEEEEEEEEEE—

HUH! SKIDDING! OUT OF C-CONTROL...

IT WORKED! I GOT OUT JUST IN TIME!

AAAAAAEEEEEE—
BLAM!



PRETTY CLEVER OF ME, PRETENDING TO BE DRUNK! JUST ENOUGH ON MY BREATH FOR AN ALIBI! AND I HAD THE DOOR PARTLY OPEN—IT WAS EASY TO GET OUT WHEN WE CRASHED! NOW IF ONLY SHE'S DEAD!



BUT... YOU'RE LUCKY, MISTER! SHE'S STILL BREATHING!

HURT BAD, THOUGH! WE GOT TO GET HER TO A HOSPITAL IN A HURRY!

SHE—OH, THANK GOODNESS!

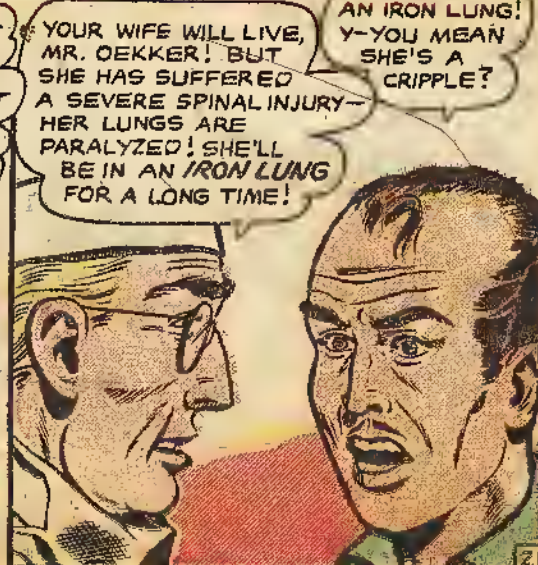
BLAST! BUT MAYBE SHE'LL DIE YET!



MR. OEKKER! I'D LIKE TO TALK WITH YOU, PLEASE!

YES! HOW IS MY WIFE?

IF HE ONLY—(CHUCKLE)—KNEW HOW MUCH I WANT TO HEAR THAT SHE'S DEAD!



YOUR WIFE WILL LIVE, MR. OEKKER! BUT SHE HAS SUFFERED A SEVERE SPINAL INJURY—HER LUNGS ARE PARALYZED! SHE'LL BE IN AN IRON LUNG FOR A LONG TIME!

AN IRON LUNG! Y-YOU MEAN SHE'S A CRIPPLE?

SO, INSTEAD OF A CORPSE, BILL HAS A CRIPPLE ON HIS HANDS! AND AFTER ETHEL IS DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL...

TIME FOR YOUR LUNCH, ETHEL. I FIXED THE SORT OF BROTH YOU LIKE!

OH, BILL, YOU'RE SO KIND TO ME! I—I HATE BEING A BURDEN TO YOU THIS WAY!

BUT MAYBE I'LL BE WELL SOON AND WE CAN HAVE FUN AGAIN! MY LUNGS FEEL STRONGER EVERY DAY, BUT I STILL CAN'T BREATHE WITHOUT THE LUNG!

SURE, YOU'LL BE FINE! AS LONG AS THE IRON LUNG WORKS!

BUT BILL HAS NOT GIVEN UP! ONE NIGHT AS A TERRIBLE STORM BREAKS...

AND SO LATER...

YES—AS LONG AS THE IRON LUNG WORKS! BUT SUPPOSE THERE SHOULD BE A POWER FAILURE! LIKE MAYBE TONIGHT, IN THIS STORM! IF THE ELECTRICITY WENT OFF, ETHEL WOULD DIE! IT WOULD BE—(HAH-HAH)—TERRIBLE, BUT NOBODY COULD BLAME ME!

THIS STORM IS—(CHUCKLE)—MADE TO ORDER! THIS TIME ETHEL WILL REALLY DIE! THE POOR FOOL! SHE DOESN'T SUSPECT YET THAT I TRIED TO KILL HER THAT NIGHT IN THE CAR! AND NOW IT'S TOO LATE FOR HER!

THERE! THAT CUTS OFF THE POWER TO THE HOUSE! THE PHONE, TOO, SO I CAN'T—(HEY-HEY)—CALL OUT FOR HELP! AND WHO IS GOING TO PROVE THAT THE STORM DIDN'T DO IT...

WHILE IN THE HOUSE, DEATH MAKES A QUIET AND DEADLY ENTRANCE...

BILL! BILL—COME QUICK! S—SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THE LUNG! THE POWER—OFF—I CAN'T BREATHE! BILL—FOR THE LOVE OF HEAVEN!

BILL! I—(GASP)—CAN'T BREATHE! MY LUNGS—WON'T WORK—I—UHHHHHHH—



SO AT LAST BILL DOES IT—AND GETS ETHEL'S MONEY, WHICH WAS WHAT HE WANTED ALL ALONG! THERE ARE UGLY WHISPERS, BUT NO PROOF! ONE NIGHT, A MONTH AFTER HIS WIFE'S BURIAL, HE COMES HOME AFTER A LATE CAROUSE...

HUH! SAY, WHO ARE Y-YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THIS HOUSE?

IT L-LOOKS LIKE— BUT NO, THAT CAN'T BE!

AND GETS THE SHOCK OF HIS LIFE...

HELLO, BILL! YES—IT'S ME, ETHEL! SURPRISED?

N-NO! YOWWWWW— I—FEEL— FAINTING! UNNNNNNGG—

BILL FAINTS, AND WHEN HE REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS, HE IS ALONE.

I—UH—SHE WAS HERE, I KNOW IT! THE DOOR— OPEN! BUT I CLOSED IT WHEN I CAME IN! ETHEL'S GHOST WAS HERE TONIGHT! S-SHE IS GOING TO H-HAUNT ME!

BUT AFTER HE HAS A CHANCE TO RECOVER...

MAYBE IT WAS ONLY MY IMAGINATION, AFTER ALL! I COULD HAVE FORGOTTEN TO CLOSE THE DOOR! YES, THAT MUST BE THE ANSWER! I'M TENSE, OVER-WROUGHT! I JUST THOUGHT I SAW ETHEL'S GHOST!

BUT AGAIN THE NEXT NIGHT...

ETHEL'S GHOST AGAIN! YIIIIIIII—

AND YET AGAIN...

IT'S HER! B-BUT SHE'LL VANISH IN A MINUTE! EVERY TIME I T-TRY TO GET CLOSE, OR SPEAK TO HER, SHE V-VANISHES! I MUST BE GOING CRAZY!

BUT JUST AS DEKKER IS ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS COLLAPSE, HE REMEMBERS SOMETHING...

I REMEMBER NOW--ETHEL TOLD ME ONCE SHE HAS A COUSIN! A COUSIN THAT LOOKED ALMOST EXACTLY LIKE HER! THEY USED TO SWITCH DATES AND FOOL THEIR BOY FRIENDS! WITH A LITTLE MAKE-UP,

AND THE SAME CLOTHES-- I WONDER IF THAT'S IT?

SO HE BEGINS TO INVESTIGATE... OF COURSE I REMEMBER THAT! BUT YOU, MR. DEKKER! YOUR POOR WIFE-- YOU BROUGHT ALL HER THINGS TO US, I REMEMBER!

YES, I KNOW THAT! BUT WHAT I MUST KNOW IS-- HAVE YOU SOLD THEM? DO YOU REMEMBER WHO BOUGHT MY WIFE'S CLOTHES?



WHY, YES, I DO! RATHER STRANGE! I REMEMBER THINKING THAT THE GIRL WHO PURCHASED YOUR WIFE'S THINGS LOOKED A GREAT DEAL LIKE YOUR WIFE! GAVE ME RATHER A SHOCK, AT FIRST!

THANKS! THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO KNOW!

SO THAT'S IT! THE OLDEST TRICK IN THE WORLD-- TRYING TO SCARE ME WITH A PHONY GHOST! SOME- NOW OR OTHER, ETHEL'S COUSIN MUST HAVE SUSPECTED ME, AND NOW SHE'S TRYING TO FRIGHTEN ME INTO A CONFESSION! OR MAYBE SHE JUST WANTS ETHEL'S MONEY! I'LL HAVE TO FIND OUT!

ETHEL WROTE A LOT OF LETTERS JUST BEFORE SHE, ER, DIED! THAT MUST BE IT-- SHE WROTE TO THIS COUSIN-- HELEN, I THINK--AND TOLD HER ABOUT THE ACCIDENT! THEN WHEN THE LUNG FAILED, HELEN MUST HAVE SMELLED SOMETHING FISHY! SHE CAME TO TOWN AND STARTED TO WORK ON ME!

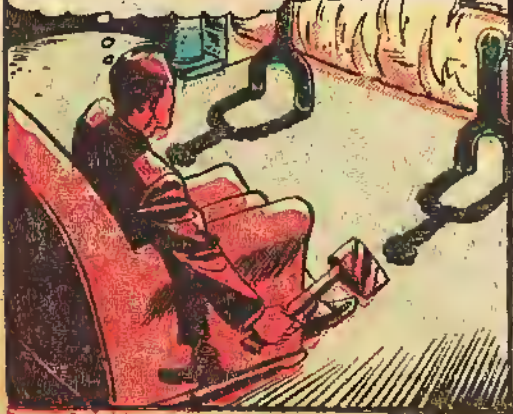


HOURS PASS, AND IT APPROACHES NIGHT...

I'LL SET A LITTLE TRAP! BUT BEFORE I KILL HER, I'VE GOT TO KNOW WHETHER OR NOT SHE'S BEEN TO THE POLICE! IF SHE HAS-- THEN I'LL HAVE TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE! NOW, IF ONLY SHE SHOWS UP TONIGHT...

MIDNIGHT PASSES QUIETLY! THEN HE HEARS A DOOR CREAK AND HASTILY HIDES HIS WEAPON...

SO! SHE'S HERE! THE LITTLE GIRL THAT WANTS TO PLAY GHOST! BROTNER-- IS SHE GOING TO GET A NASTY SURPRISE!



AND WHEN THE "GHOST GIRL" ENTERS, HE GOES INTO HIS CAREFULLY PLANNED ACT...

ETHEL! Y-YOU'VE COME FOR M-ME! PLEASE-ETHEL- DON'T! I-DIDN'T MEAN TO-KILL YOU! I'M SORRY! I-

YES, BILL, I'VE COME FOR YOU! YOU MUST COME AND SHARE MY GRAVE WITH ME-NOW!

NO! I'LL DO ANYTHING-GIVE YOU ANYTHING! ONLY GO BACK-GO BACK AND LEAVE ME IN P-PEACE!

BUT YOU HAVE MY MONEY, BILL! I WANT MY MONEY, ALL OF IT! GIVE IT TO ME AND THEN I'LL LEAVE YOU IN PEACE!



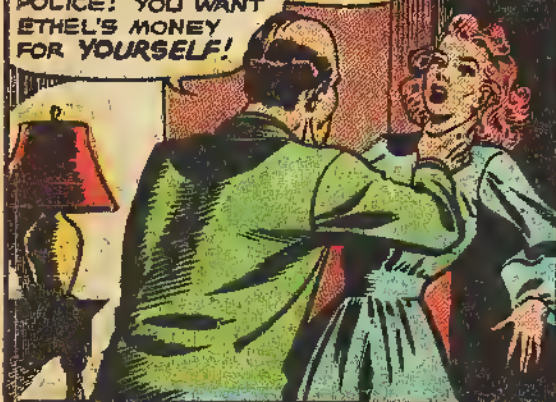
AND NOW BILL DEKKER KNOWS ALL HE NEEDS TO KNOW...

OH-H-Y-YOU KNOW!

HAH-FOOLED YOU, DIDN'T I? YOU'RE PRETTY SOLID FOR A GHOST, HELEN! AND I KNOW SOMETHING ELSE, TOO! YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TO THE POLICE! YOU WANT ETHEL'S MONEY FOR YOURSELF!

OF COURSE! YOU'RE ETHEL'S COUSIN, HELEN, AND WHEN YOU SMELLED A RAT, YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD SCARE ME INTO GIVING UP THE MONEY-THE MONEY I KILLED ETHEL TO GET!

LET ME ALONE! EEEEEEE-I-I'LL GO TO THE POLICE NOW-I'LL TELL THEM EVERYTHING! YOU JUST ADMITTED KILLING ETHEL!



YOU WON'T TELL THE POLICE ANYTHING, HELEN! YOU'RE GOING TO JOIN MY WIFE! (HAH-HAH)-YOU WANTED TO BE A GHOST, AND NOW YOU'LL GET YOUR CHANCE!

UNLUCKY FOR YOU THAT YOU DIDN'T GO TO THE COPS, HELEN! BUT LUCKY FOR ME...

EEEEEE-



MYSTERIES

LATER...

THAT'S RIGHT, HELEN!
ACT LIKE YOU'RE
ASLEEP! THAT'S WHAT
EVERYBODY WHO SEES US
WILL THINK—AND PRETTY
SOON YOU CAN HAVE A
NICE LONG SLEEP—
FOREVER!



JUST THE PLACE,
HELEN! THAT PIT IS
ALMOST THREE-HUNDRED
FEET DEEP! THEY'LL
NEVER FIND YOU THERE—
NOT IN A MILLION
YEARS!



THESE WILL KEEP YOU
DOWN UNTIL YOU'RE JUST
BONES! WHITE BONES THAT
NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO
IDENTIFY! YOU
MADE A BAD
MISTAKE,
HELEN, WHEN
YOU TRIED TO
PLAY GHOST
WITH ME!



THERE! NOW MAYBE
I CAN START ENJOYING
ETHEL'S MONEY!



ON THE WAY HOME HE
MAKES BIG PLANS...

I'M SAFE NOW! I'LL
WAIT A WEEK OR
SO, THEN CONVERT

ETHEL'S ESTATE INTO CASH
AND TAKE OFF FOR SOUTH
AMERICA! I THINK—
(CHUCKLE)—I'LL LIKE
THE LIFE IN RIO...



BUT AS HE STEPS
INSIDE...

OH—NO! NO!
NO! EYEEEEEE—



COME IN,
BILL!
SURPRISE!

WE'VE COME
TO LIVE WITH
YOU, BILL!
WE'LL NEVER
LEAVE YOU!

EEEEEEEE—
GAAAAAA—



MARK OF THE BEAST

By JOHN MARTIN

RICHARD CROW staggered along the bare stretch of ribbed sea-sand and cursed. Along the lonely stretch of coast low, black clouds were pressing in. A wind was rising from the mouth of the Manuxet. It whipped past him with its thin, high voice, tearing at his clothes, whispering thoughts of darkness and disaster in his ears. And far back in the town, heard faintly over the wind, he could sense the dogs' howling. They always howled when the hurricane struck along this part of the New England Coast. Witch-haunted by tradition, a place of ship-wrecks in truth, it was avoided by most commercial craft.

A blast of wind struck Crow squarely in the chest and he gasped for breath, then found the strength to hurry on. An hour tolled in his mind like a mournful dirge. At four, Stephen Mallory, his rival for the affections of the pretty Diana Wenrith, was coming to meet Richard at the old Crow mansion that looked out over the bay.

Again, he cursed in the teeth of the wind. If the problem of disposing of Stephen had been mere murder, he might have been free to marry Diana at half-past four, with Stephen's drugged body being carried out to sea by the dreaded undertow. But it wasn't simple. He remembered Diana as she had stood upon the strand just twenty minutes before. The love that had once bloomed in her eyes for him was dead. He could see that. Only Stephen Mallory could call forth the light now. And death would not wipe it out. If Stephen died, she would have fastened on his memory as upon her life itself. Stephen must live, therefore; but maimed, so changed in body and soul, so horrible that Diana could not bear to look at him, think of him.

And for that, Richard Crow reminded himself, no mere physical agency could suffice. He shuddered, looking out to sea where the black clouds were assuming weird and terrifying shapes as they scudded in toward the land. Stronger powers, powers of mind and spirit, powers of darkness alone could be relied upon.

He glanced down at the single strand of hair he had managed to pluck from Diana's shoulder. The old manuscript he had dug from his grandfather's library, had told him many things. To prepare a potion strong enough to render the person who drank it utterly repulsive to all others, arcane ingredients were necessary. He shuddered again at the thought of some of them. For securing such ingredients,

witches had been burned along these coasts in the seventeenth century. But fire and the rope had never deterred those to whom the Devil had promised his evil protection. Nor had it halted those for whom the iron of graveyard shovels and the crook of cross-roads gallows were yet strong.

CROW LAUGHED harshly in the face of the rising wind. A hair from the head of one's beloved. Thus, part of the ancient formula ran. He had plucked it all unknown from Diana and left her, she never knowing that part of her would serve to destroy her own beloved. Only one ingredient remained—the blood of some small sea animal. And then the recipe of destruction would be complete.

He halted suddenly, seeing the track of a tiny sand-crab crossing the hard-packed sand. An instant later he had pounced on the creature, squeezed its life-blood into a small vial he carried. A glance at his watch sent him hurrying still faster along the beach. Time was drawing short.

Ahead, the bulk of Crow House loomed up, sitting on its crag of rock that overlooked the sullen, heaving ocean. Now the breakers had begun to roar. They whipped in over the strand, their white caps a crown to the funereally-dark waters beneath. His heart beat faster as he saw the old, family seat of the Crows. He had to secure Diana's heart, her hand in marriage, he knew. For more than love pressed him on. Only Diana's money could save the reversal of the Crow family fortunes. Only vast sums now could keep the high old house brooding over the coast, hiding its secrets.

Quickly, he hurried up the stony path leading from the beach to the old house. He knew the house was empty; he knew no one would interrupt him in the final stages of his vengeance. Since his mother died, he had been the last of the Crow family.

Entering the house through the door that opened on the sea-ward terrace, he hurried down to the old kitchen. Here, he plucked from a shelf the bottle that held the dread formula. Quickly, he added the ingredients he had obtained.

Outside, now, the storm was breaking in its full fury. Smiling, Crow stepped to a window, glancing down toward the road to the town. Mallory would have started out before this. He would not turn back, for safety would lie more surely at the old house than on the exposed road.

Whirling, he went rigid, staring at the

completed vial that contained the formula. In harsh tones he pronounced the ritual words the ancient manuscript had prescribed. Instantly, a blast of thunder split the air over the house. Richard Crow's eyes seemed to glaze over. A smell of brimstone and fire drifted through the vaulted room. Watching the beaker which held the completed potion, he saw its brilliant green surface begin to boil. Then, as lightning flashed, and a shudder ran through him, it turned to a colorless, crystal shade.

Colorless, the manuscript had said. Odorless—and tasteless, too. It would be simple to add it to Mallory's wine.

He flung open the door to the old wine cellar, descended and selected a bottle of deep red burgundy. Preparing a tray with two glasses, he poured himself a drink of the wine. To the wine in the other glass he added a few drops of the deadly, colorless liquid. Idly, he wondered what form the maiming action of the potion would take. His lips curled scornfully.

OUTSIDE, from the other side of the house an auto horn abruptly blared.

Mallory!

Swiftly, Crow carried the tray with its bottle of wine and two glasses to the drawing room on the first floor. Then he flung open the front door.

Stephen Mallory stood there, drenched.

"I got your letter only this morning," Mallory said, coming in out of the driving rain. "You said you had something important to tell me."

"I have. Come in." Crow nodded and led the way to the drawing room. His eyes fixed on the already-poured wine. He waved Mallory to a chair. In his temples, blood pounded. It was going to be easy. The poor fool had entered the trap without any suspicion. Inside, he laughed richly.

"I wanted to tell you about Diana," he began.

"What about Diana?" Stephen Mallory said.

"Why that I'm stepping out, Mallory," Crow said amiably. "I know when I've lost."

"That's good of you," Mallory murmured. His eyes were fixed on Richard Crow. "That's decent, Crow." He fumbled for a cigarette. "Would you have a match?"

Crow turned to a richly-appointed smoking table. A match flared in his fingers. Mallory bent his neck forward as Crow put the flame to his cigarette.

"Let's have a drink on it, eh?" Crow said. "It's a good vintage. A drink to good sportsmanship, eh Mallory?"

He picked up the wine tray and, carefully keeping Mallory's glass turned from him,

extended it. Mallory picked up the fatal glass. It gleamed with the rich dark wine. Now the veins stood out on Crow's temples like knotted cords. The glass of wine was the brilliant focus of his eyes. He watched Mallory put it to his lips, drink. Crow did the same. Through the wine he kept his gaze on Mallory. The change should come any second now, he thought, bracing himself. Yes, it would be horrible beyond doubt. Gifts that came from the Devil's hand were never pretty. Then he closed his eyes for an instant. When he opened them, he got a queer shock.

For Stephen Mallory was smiling grimly.

Without the slightest premonitory twinge, a ghastly pain seemed to grip every atom of Richard Crow's body. His empty wine-glass dropped, shattering, to the floor.

"So that's what you had planned for me," Mallory muttered, a look of disgust passing over his face. "I knew the moment I saw you, Crow, that you were planning something dirty, low. I know the lore of this coast. I know why witches were burned here, why ordinary folk do not come here, even to this day. I know something you must have forgotten. That anyone who makes a compact with the Devil or concocts one of his hellish brews acquires the mark of the cloven hoof on his forehead! I saw it the moment you opened the door. Wine was the only way you could have gotten at me, so I changed the position of the glasses when you turned to get me a match!" Mallory's eyes were mocking. "You should have looked in a mirror before you opened that door, Crow. You might have been able to hide the mark of the beast!" He rose, walked swiftly to the door. "But you can never hide yourself—now!"

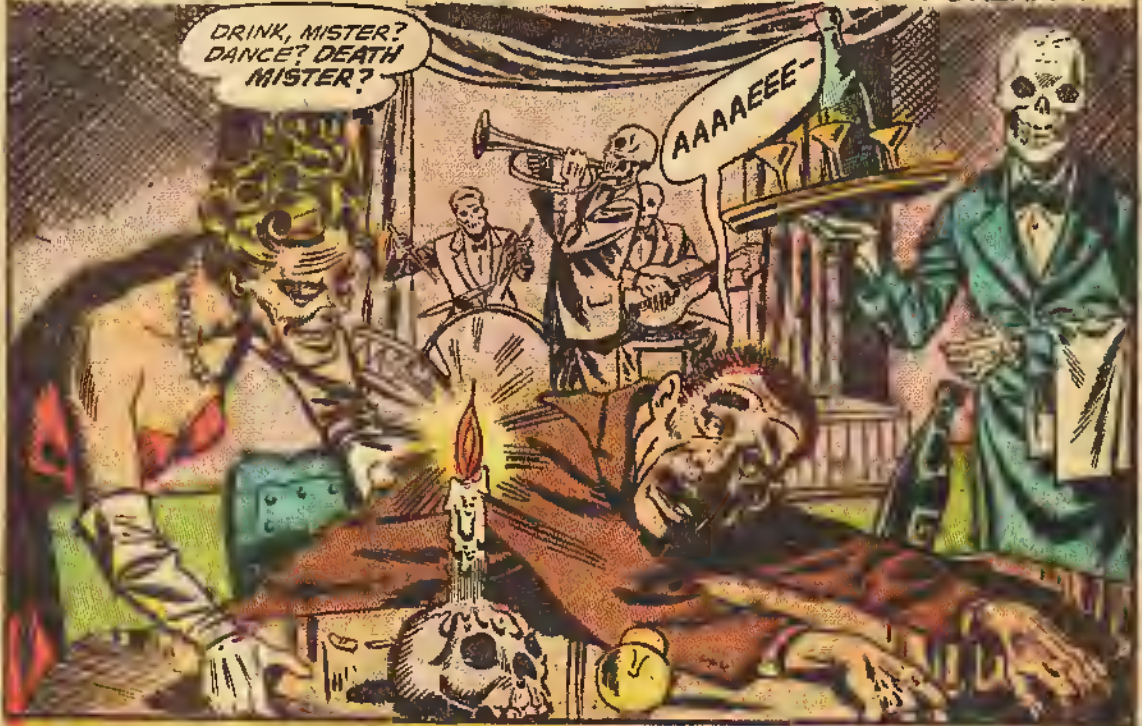
"Wait! Wait!" Crow's voice was an agonized scream. But Mallory was gone. His head seemed to be splitting, his brain breaking up. But a beam of hope broke suddenly through the murky depths of his mind. What Mallory said was true. He could hide the mark of the beast with some kind of flesh-colored tattoo. It was merely a tiny imprint. Whimpering with pain, he staggered to a mirror, stared into it—and shrieked, clawing at his face. He stood there only an instant; then he turned, his dragging steps leading to the desk where there was a gun that could put an end to his supreme misery.

There was no hope now, he knew, no mere cloven-hoofed mark.

On his face, printed there by the potion, was now the awful features of the most hideous visage in history, the seamed, corrupted, rotting face from which all mankind had fled since the dawn of time: The Devil's!

Horror A La Mode

YOU'RE BIG JIM MCCOY, SEE, AND YOU RUN THINGS IN CIRCLE CITY! YOU'RE THE BOSS MAN, THE BIG SHOT, THE KING PIN! YOU GOT A PIECE OF EVERY DIRTY RACKET IN TOWN, FROM THE NUMBERS TO SLOT MACHINES! BUT YOU ALSO GOT GERTRUDE—AND GERTRUDE IS GETTING IN WHAT LITTLE HAIR YOU HAVE LEFT! BECAUSE SHE KNOWS WHERE THE BODIES ARE, LITERALLY, AND SO GERTIE HAS TO GO! BUT HOW? YOU GOT TO PLAY IT SAFE, VERY SAFE, BECAUSE THE COPS ARE LAYING FOR YOU! THEN, ONE NIGHT, ON A LONELY ROAD, YOU SEE THE CHARNEL HOUSE! THAT'S THE ANSWER—AND THE BEGINNING OF THE DEADLY DREAM...



EVERY NIGHT, OF LATE, YOU HAVE THE SAME DREAM! YOU CAN FEEL IT BEGINNING...

I—THAT CLUB
AHEAD—GOT TO—
STOP THERE!

AND THEN, IN YOUR DREAM, YOU'RE DRIVING THAT SAME LONELY ROAD AGAIN...

I'VE BEEN MEANING TO
STOP AT THAT CRAZY-LOOKING
CLUB FOR A MONTH!
TONIGHT I'LL DO IT!



SOMEBODY, YOU THINK, MUST REALLY HAVE BEEN FEELING MORBID WHEN THEY OPENED THIS CLUB...



THEY—(CHUCKLE)—MUST WANT TO SCARE THE CUSTOMERS TO DEATH! BUT MAYBE, I CAN FIND WHAT I NEED HERE! STRANGERS—JUST WHAT I NEED!

HERE YOU ARE, SIS! SAY, WHAT DO YOU LOOK LIKE UNDER THAT—(UGH)—MASK?

CHECK

NOT RESPONSIBLE

SORRY, SIR! I CAN'T TELL YOU THAT! AGAINST THE RULES OF THE HOUSE!

LOOKS LIKE I'M THE ONLY CUSTOMER, EH? WHERE IS EVERYBODY?

WE NEVER HAVE A CROWD THIS EARLY, SIR! HERE YOU ARE—AN EXCELLENT TABLE! THE FLOOR SHOW WILL START IMMEDIATELY!

EXCUSE ME, SIR, BUT YOU WOULD LIKE COMPANY, PERHAPS? OUR D GIRLS...

D GIRLS? YOU MEAN B GIRLS, DON'T YOU? OH, I GET IT NOW! O IS FOR DEATH! HAH-HAH—PRETTY GOOD!

MYSTERIES

AND, IN YOUR DREAM, YOU ALWAYS SEE THE SAME OLD GIRL...

NO, NOT NOW, BUT TELL ME

I CAN'T TELL YOU THAT, MISTER! IT'S A TRADE SECRET! THE BOSS WOULD KILL ME IF I GAVE ANYTHING AWAY!

BUT JUST THEN COMES THE FLOOR SHOW, AND IN YOUR DREAM IT IS TERRIFYINGLY VIVID AND LIFE-LIKE...

THANKS FOR THE CHAMPAGNE, MISTER! DO YOU WANT TO DANCE WITH ME!

SOMETHING - WHO MAKES YOU UP LIKE THAT? YOU REALLY LOOK TERRIBLE! THEY MUST BE A GENIUS!

THE BOSS, HUH? THAT'S THE GUY I WANT TO SEE!

UGH! THEY GIVE ME THE CREEPS! WHOEVER YOUR BOSS IS - HE SURE GOES THE WHOLE WAY!

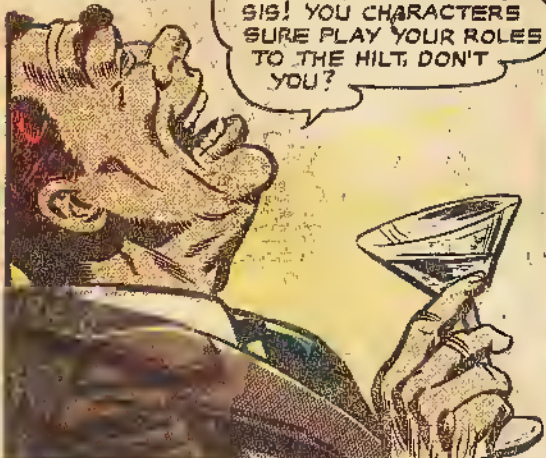
YES, THEY'RE VERY GOOD! THEY'VE JUST COME FROM A LONG ENGAGEMENT IN HADES!



HADES, EH? HO-HO-HO! THAT'S PRETTY GOOD, SIS! YOU CHARACTERS SURE PLAY YOUR ROLES TO THE HILT, DON'T YOU?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN, MISTER! BUT IF YOU WANT TO TAKE A TRIP TO HADES, I CAN ARRANGE IT!

ME GO TO HADES? HAH-HAH-HAH! OKAY, I'M GAME FOR ANYTHING! IT'S ALL PART OF THE ROUTINE, HUH?

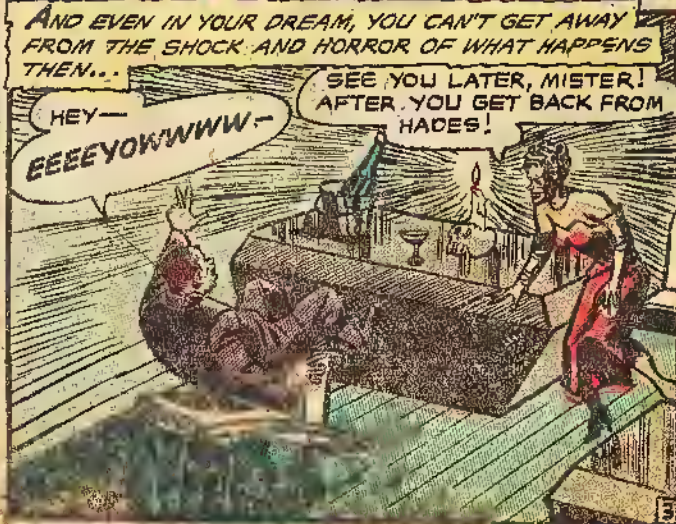


SURE, MISTER! YOU MIGHT CALL IT THAT! JUST PART OF THE ROUTINE!

AND EVEN IN YOUR DREAM, YOU CAN'T GET AWAY FROM THE SHOCK AND HORROR OF WHAT HAPPENS THEN...

SEE YOU LATER, MISTER! AFTER YOU GET BACK FROM HADES!

HEY - EEEYOK'WWW -



MYSTERIES

YOU GO DOWN A LONG SLIDE INTO AN AWFUL BLACKNESS...

YIIIIII — GOING DOWN AND DOWN! HEY—THIS IS GOING TOO FAR! SOMEBODY MIGHT GET H-HURT...

UNTIL...

WELCOME, SIR! WE'LL ASSIGN YOU A FURNACE RIGHT AWAY!

YOU'RE OUR FIRST CUSTOMER ALL NIGHT, SIR!

HEY, LEMME GO! YOU GUYS ARE TAKING THINGS TOO FAR! I DEMAND TO SEE THE BOSS!

SURE, SIR! SORRY! IT'S JUST PART OF OUR LITTLE GAME!

YOU'RE THE FIRST ONE EVER TO COMPLAIN, SIR! BUT WE'LL FIX YOU RIGHT UP!

OKAY—OKAY! I'M NOT SORE! I JUST WANT TO SEE THE BOSS!

AND A MINUTE OR SO LATER...

COME IN! COME IN! MR. MCCOY!

HUH! HE KNOWS WHO I AM! WELL, THAT OUGHT TO MAKE IT EASIER!

GOOD EVENING, MR. MCCOY! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU? I HOPE YOU HAVE NO COMPLAINTS!

N-NO! NOT EXACTLY! AS A MATTER OF FACT, I WANT TO TALK A LITTLE, ER, BUSINESS!

I'VE HEARD OF YOU, MR. MCCOY, AND IT WILL BE A PLEASURE TO DO BUSINESS WITH YOU! I LIKE MEN OF YOUR TYPE! NOW JUST WHAT IS IT YOU REQUIRE—AT A PRICE, OF COURSE!

HE REMINDS ME OF SOMEONE!

GOOD! I KNEW WE'D GET ALONG!

MYSTERIES

AND IN YOUR DREAM YOU REMEMBER, DISTINCTLY, EVERY WORD YOU SAID...

YOU KNOW I RUN THINGS AROUND HERE, EH? BUT I GOT SOMETHING TO DO— AND TO DO IT, I NEED AN ALIBI, A VERY SPECIAL ALIBI THAT THE COPS CAN'T BREAK!

HMMM— AN ALIBI! I SEE NO REASON WHY THAT CAN'T BE ARRANGED!

OKAY, LISTEN! I, ER, I GOT TO PUT SOMEBODY OUT OF THE WAY, SEE! I'LL DO IT AT A CERTAIN TIME! THEN I WANT YOU AND THE WHOLE STAFF HERE TO SWEAR THAT I WAS HERE, AT THE CHARNEL HOUSE, DURING THAT TIME! THAT WAY I'LL BE IN THE CLEAR! I GOT A FEELING I CAN TRUST YOU!

OH, YOU CAN TRUST ME! BE SURE OF THAT! IT'S A DEAL, MR. MCCOY! JUST GIVE ME THE DETAILS AS TO WHEN AND WHERE AND I'LL SEE THAT YOU HAVE A PERFECT ALIBI!

HAH-HAH! I THOUGHT SO! BUSINESS HAS BEEN A PRETTY ROTTEN, EH? WELL, THIS WILL HELP YOU OUT!



THEN IN YOUR DREAM EVERYTHING GETS FUZZY AND LOST UNTIL, SUDDENLY, YOU'RE ENTERING YOUR OWN APARTMENT SEVERAL NIGHTS LATER...

GERTIE? YOU AROUND?

TONIGHT I DO IT! THE END OF HER NAGGING AND WHINING AT LAST! AND SHE—(CHUCKLE)—THINKS SHE'S SAFE BECAUSE SHE KNOWS SO MUCH ABOUT ME!



THEN...

KEEP QUIET, JIM! DON'T YOU SEE I'M LISTENING TO MY FAVORITE PROGRAM— ...AND HORROR— THEN THE TALES? IT'S WIND ROSE AWFULLY AND THE GOOD HANGED MAN SWAYED! TONIGHT! I...



SUDDENLY YOU REMEMBER THAT A LONG TIME AGO, YOU AND GERTIE USED TO PLAY A SILLY KIND OF GAME! GERTIE LOVES TO BE SCARED...

AHHHHOOOOOOO — I'M A MONSTER! I'M GOING TO GET YOUUUUUU...

JIM! STOP IT! EEEEEEE— YOU KNOW HOW SCARED I GET!



NOW, BABY, YOU KNOW YOU LIKE TO BE SCARED! REMEMBER HOW WE USED TO DO THIS ALL THE TIME?

NO, I DON'T! NOW YOU STOP IT—TEE-HEE! EEEEEEE— YOU'RE GIVING ME COLD CHILLS!





ALWAYS BEFORE, WHEN YOU PLAYED THE SCARE GAME WITH GERTIE, YOU STOPPED! BUT THIS TIME...

JIM! YOU'RE REALLY HURTING ME! STOP—

YES, BABY! IT'S NO GAME THIS TIME! THIS IS THE— (CHUCKLE)—

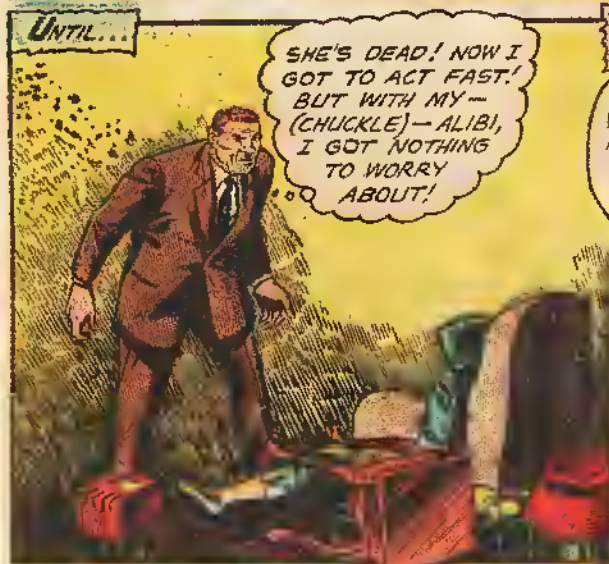
MCCOY! THE-HAH-HAH— JIM MCCOY! YOU'LL NEVER THREATEN ME AGAIN!

ME! STOP— OHHHHN— GUUUU—



KNOWING MY BUSINESS WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD NOW, WILL IT? YOU'LL NEVER TELL THE COPS ABOUT THE GUYS I HAD BUMPED OFF!

UNNNNN— GASP— GGGGAA—



UNTIL...

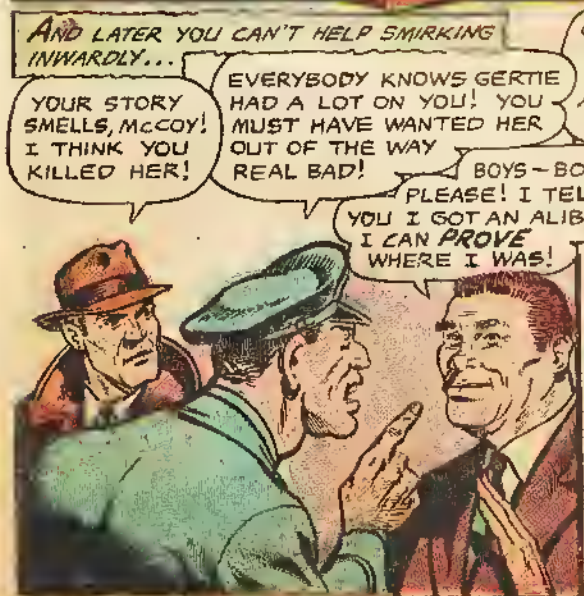
SHE'S DEAD! NOW I GOT TO ACT FAST! BUT WITH MY— (CHUCKLE)— ALIBI, I GOT NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT!



YOU WAIT A FEW HOURS FOR THE BODY TO STIFFEN, THEN YOU GO INTO YOUR ACT...

POLICE? SEND SOMEONE UP TO MY APARTMENT FAST! MY GIRL FRIEND HAS BEEN MURDERED! HURRY, WILL YOU! THIS IS JIM MCCOY SPEAKING...

MCCOY! YOU CALLING THE COPS?



AND LATER YOU CAN'T HELP SMIRKING INWARDLY...

YOUR STORY SMELLS, MCCOY! I THINK YOU KILLED HER!

EVERYBODY KNOWS GERTIE HAD A LOT ON YOU! YOU MUST HAVE WANTED HER OUT OF THE WAY REAL BAD!

BOYS—BOYS! PLEASE! I TELL YOU I GOT AN ALIBI! I CAN PROVE WHERE I WAS!

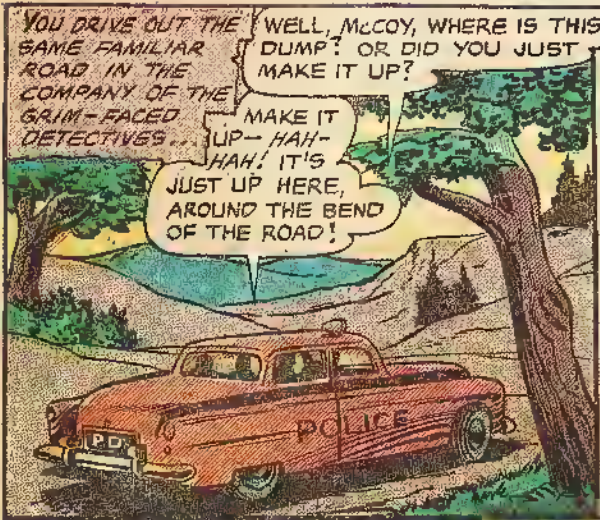
OKAY, SO MAYBE YOU GOT AN ALIBI! MAYBE!



I TELL YOU I WAS AT THE CHARNEL HOUSE! YOU SAW HOW STIFF THE BODY WAS! SHE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN KILLED LESS THAN FIVE OR SIX HOURS AGO— AND AT THAT TIME I WAS AT THE CLUB! THEY'LL TELL YOU I WAS!

WE'LL START CHECKING RIGHT NOW!

POLICE



YOU DRIVE OUT THE SAME FAMILIAR ROAD IN THE COMPANY OF THE GRIM-FACED DETECTIVES...

WELL, MCCOY, WHERE IS THIS DUMP? OR DID YOU JUST MAKE IT UP?

MAKE IT UP—HAH—HAH! IT'S JUST UP HERE, AROUND THE BEND OF THE ROAD!

HERE! JUST TURN UP HERE AND YOU'LL SEE IT! HMMM—THAT'S F-FUNNY! THEY MUST HAVE TAKEN DOWN THEIR SIGN...

WHAT YOU GIVING US, MCCOY? THERE AIN'T NOTHING AROUND HERE!



H-HUH! I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS! W-WE MUST HAVE THE WRONG PLACE!

THIS IS THE **RIGHT** PLACE, MCCOY! YOU JUST PICKED THE **WRONG** STORY!

BUT I TELL YOU THERE **WAS** A CLUB HERE! A ROADHOUSE! YOU GOT TO BELIEVE ME! I GOT AN ALIBI, I SWEAR! NO—LET ME GO! THIS IS SOME CRAZY JOKE!

I CHECKED, TOO! THERE **NEVER** HAS BEEN ANY CHARNEL HOUSE ON THIS ROAD—OR **ANYWHERE!** COME ON, MCCOY! WE'RE CHARGING YOU WITH MURDER!

YAAAAEE—

THESE RUINS ARE FORTY YEARS OLD! BETTER GIVE UP!



AND THAT IS YOUR DREAM! OVER AND OVER AGAIN, THE SAME THING UNTIL THEY WAKE YOU...

MCCOY! WAKE UP! COME ON NOW, IT'S TIME! YOU'VE GOT TO GO NOW!

N-NO! PLEASE! I—I WAS DREAMING! I—

AND YOU REALIZE, FOR THE LAST TIME, THAT IT WAS NO DREAM...

COME ON, MCCOY, DON'T KEEP THE CHAIR WAITING!

YEAH! THIS IS IT!

YAAAAEE—I TELL YOU THERE **WAS** A ROADHOUSE! AND NOW I—(SOB)—**KNOW WHO THE BOSS WAS!**

OH H Y O W W W E E E E E E E E E E — NO— YOU C-CAN'T! I— G U N N N N N N —

POOR FELLOW! HE DIDN'T DIE VERY WELL, DID HE? BUT THEN HE SHOULD NEVER HAVE TRUSTED ME!

EXECUTION CHAMBER. DANGER! 20,000 VOLTS



CALL ME Monster

HE WAS ONLY A MILD LITTLE CLERK, AFRAID OF HIS SHADOW—AND EVEN MORE AFRAID OF HIS WIFE! BUT DEEP IN THE DARK RECESSES OF HIS BRAIN WERE LURKING EVIL AND TERRIBLE PHANTOMS! AND WHEN THEY WERE UNLEASHED, THIS DRAB LITTLE MAN FOUND THAT HE HAD WOLF'S BLOOD...



LITTLE HORACE MEEKS HAD BEEN TAKING ORDERS FROM EVERYONE FOR A LONG TIME, ESPECIALLY HIS WIFE, BERTHA...

AND EVEN STRANGERS...

HORACE! DON'T YOU DARE LEAVE THIS HOUSE WITHOUT YOUR RUBBERS! YOU KNOW YOU ALWAYS CATCH COLD!

YES, BERTHA!

OUT OF MY WAY, SQUIRT!

OF COURSE! PLEASE EXCUSE ME—I'M S-SORRY!



BUT HORACE HAS ONE SECRET CRAVING!
ONE NIGHT, AFTER INDULGING IT...

GOLLY WHAT A SCARY
PICTURE! SWELL, THOUGH!
I GOT A REAL THRILL! BUT
NOW I'LL HAVE TO LIE TO
BERTHA-- TELL HER I
WORKED LATE!



AND THEN, WITHOUT KNOWING HOW OR WHY HORACE
FINDS HIMSELF FOLLOWING A PRETTY GIRL...



W-WHAT AM I
DOING? I C-CAN'T
SEEM TO STOP MY-
SELF! I SHOULD GO
HOME-- BUT I KEEP
FOLLOWING
THAT
GIRL!

INTO A DARK
STREET...

I W-WANT TO HARM
HER! SOMETHING IS
DRIVING ME-- COMPELLING
ME! I CAN'T STOP!

PLEASE
NO! GET
AWAY!
HELP!

HORACE DOESN'T REALIZE THAT HE LOOKS
LIKE-- THIS

GRRRR--
RRRRR!

EEEEEE
EEEEEE!



I MUST--
SOME TERRIBLE
COMPULSION IS
MAKING ME
DO THIS!

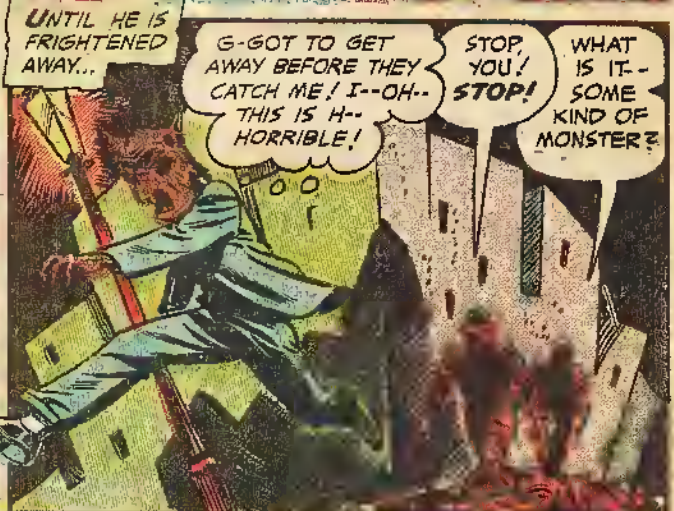
OH--
GAAA--
AAAA!

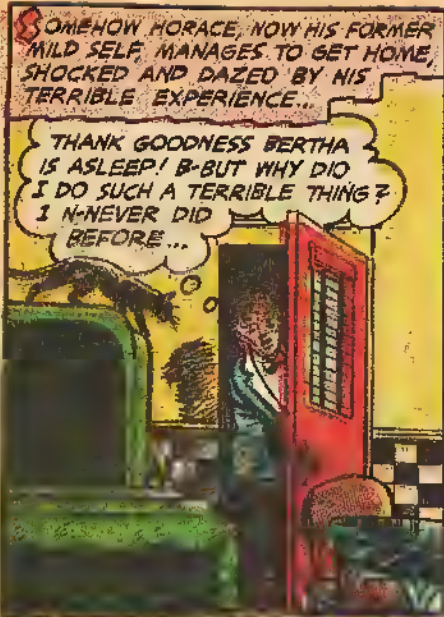
UNTIL HE IS
FRIGHTENED
AWAY...

G-GOT TO GET
AWAY BEFORE THEY
CATCH ME! I--OH--
THIS IS H--
HORRIBLE!

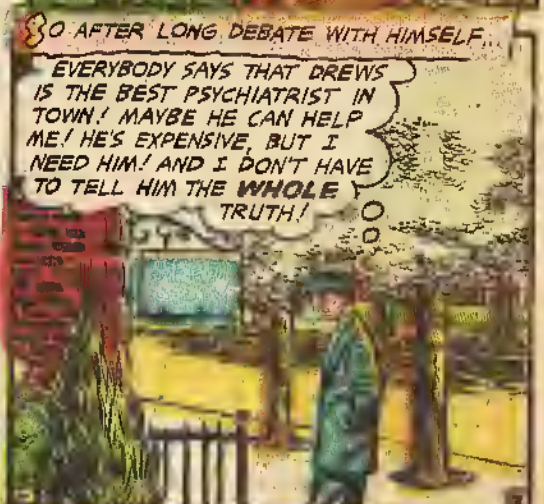
STOP,
YOU!
STOP!

WHAT
IS IT--
SOME
KIND OF
MONSTER?





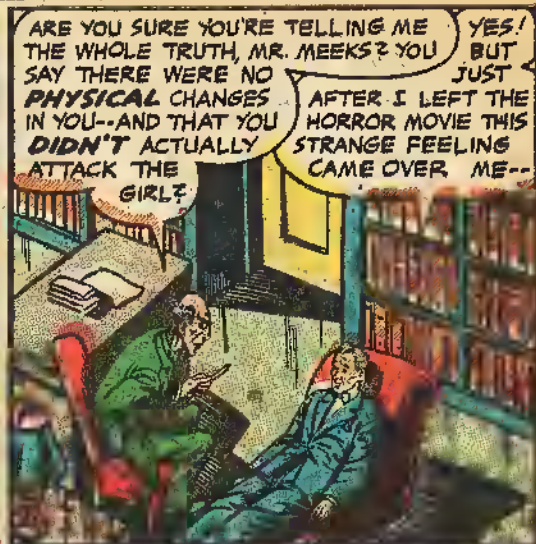
AND ONLY THEN DOES THE HORRIBLE TRUTH BEGIN TO DAWN ON HORACE MECKS...





SO... N- NOTHING LIKE IT EVER HAPPENED TO ME BEFORE, DR. DREWS! I--I HAD THIS INSANE IMPULSE TO GO AFTER A GIRL, TO TEAR HER THROAT OUT! I WAS LIKE A-- WOLF!

HMMM--VERY INTERESTING!



ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE TELLING ME THE WHOLE TRUTH, MR. MEEKS? YOU SAY THERE WERE NO **PHYSICAL** CHANGES IN YOU--AND THAT YOU **DIDN'T** ACTUALLY ATTACK THE GIRL?

YES! BUT JUST

AFTER I LEFT THE HORROR MOVIE THIS STRANGE FEELING CAME OVER ME--



I'M AFRAID MEEKS, THAT IT LOOKS VERY MUCH LIKE A CASE OF **LYCANTHROPY**! EXTREMELY SERIOUS!

L-LYCANTHROPY? W-WHAT'S THAT?

WOLF MADNESS! VERY LITTLE IS ACTUALLY KNOWN ABOUT IT--EXCEPT THAT IT EXISTS! THE PERSON AFFLICTED THINKS HE *IS* A WOLF AND SOMETIMES, ACTUALLY TAKES ON A WOLF-LIKE APPEARANCE! IT'S FORTUNATE YOU CAME TO ME, MEEKS! I HAPPEN TO BE AN **EXPERT** ON LYCANTHROPY!



Y-YOU SAY YOU'RE AN **EXPERT**? THEN YOU CAN HELP ME? FIX IT 'O I WON'T H-HARM ANYONE, WON'T HAVE THE SAME TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE AGAIN?

IT'S MUCH TOO EARLY TO SAY, YET! SOMETIMES THERE IS ONLY **ONE** ATTACK IN A LIFETIME! BUT IF YOU FEEL THE SYMPTOMS AGAIN, THE WOLF MADNESS COMING OVER YOU, COME TO ME AT ONCE! AND--



DON'T WORRY! I WON'T TELL THE **POLICE** ABOUT THE GIRL YOU ATTACKED LAST NIGHT! AFTER ALL YOU **ARE** MY PATIENT NOW--AND THE GIRL WAS ONLY FRIGHTENED, NOT SERIOUSLY HURT! GOODBYE!

G-GOODBYE!

FOR A FEW DAYS HORACE IS FREE OF THE HORRIBLE SYMPTOMS, THEN ONE NIGHT...

HORACE! I'VE TOLD YOU A THOUSAND TIMES NOT TO SMOKE IN HERE! AND ANOTHER THING, YOU-- I--BLAH--BLAH--NAG--NAG--

YES, M'DEAR! I'M SORRY, DEAR!

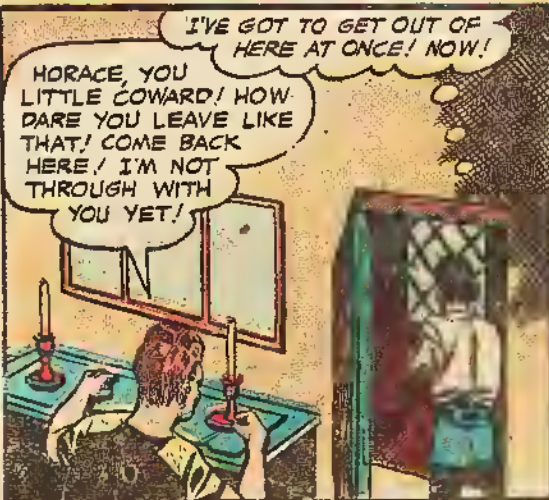


I--I FEEL IT COMING OVER ME AGAIN! THAT HORRIBLE FEELING! B-BUT I CAN'T, I MUSTN'T! NOT NOW! N-NOT IN FRONT OF MY WIFE!



I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE AT ONCE! NOW!

HORACE, YOU LITTLE COWARD! HOW DARE YOU LEAVE LIKE THAT! COME BACK HERE! I'M NOT THROUGH WITH YOU YET!

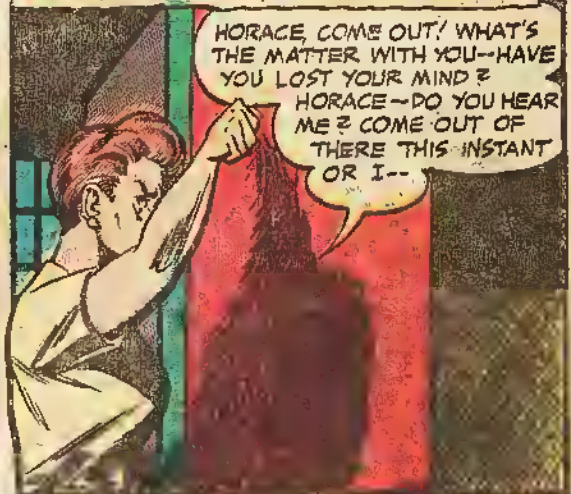


AND INSIDE... T-TOO LATE! I-IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN! I--ALMOST AFRAID TO LOOK IN THE MIRROR!

HORACE! IF YOU DON'T OPEN THIS DOOR--

HORACE LOCKS HIMSELF IN HIS ROOM, BUT...

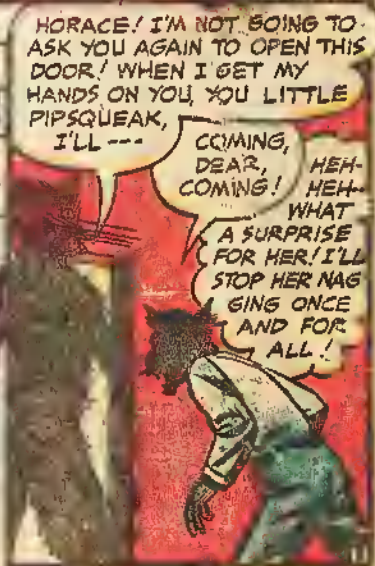
HORACE, COME OUT! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU--HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MIND? HORACE--DO YOU HEAR ME? COME OUT OF THERE THIS INSTANT OR I--



SO--THAT'S HOW I LOOK! UGH--NO WONDER THAT POOR GIRL WAS AFRAID OF ME! THE DOCTOR WAS RIGHT--I DO LOOK LIKE A--WOLF!

HORACE! I'M NOT GOING TO ASK YOU AGAIN TO OPEN THIS DOOR! WHEN I GET MY HANDS ON YOU, YOU LITTLE PIPSQUEAK, I'LL ---

COMING, DEAR, COMING! HEH-HEH-WHAT A SURPRISE FOR HER! I'LL STOP HER NAGGING ONCE AND FOR ALL!



THE DOOR CREAKS OPEN.

HORACE, I--
EEEEEEEE!



NO! HORACE--
WHERE ARE
YOU! HELP!
AAAAA!

I'M HORACE,
YOU FAT FOOL!
JUST A LITTLE
CHANGED! AND
NOW--GRRR!



LATER, AS THE ATTACK WEARS OFF...

ARGRRR!

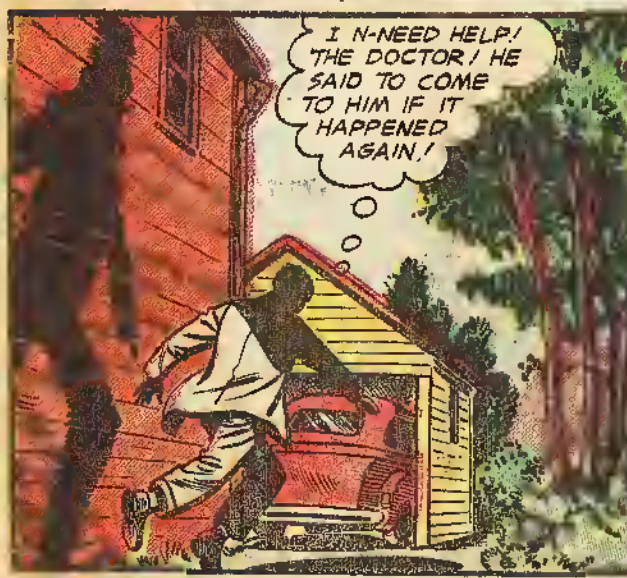
YIIIIIIII!



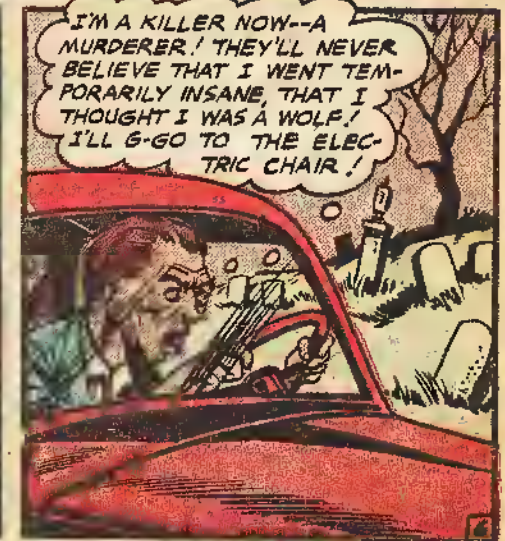
H-HUH! I K-KILLED
HER! THE WOLF
MADNESS--I DIDN'T
KNOW WHAT I
WAS DOING!



I N-NEED HELP!
THE DOCTOR! HE
SAID TO COME
TO HIM IF IT
HAPPENED
AGAIN!



I'M A KILLER NOW--A
MURDERER! THEY'LL NEVER
BELIEVE THAT I WENT TEM-
PORARILY INSANE, THAT I
THOUGHT I WAS A WOLF!
I'LL G-GO TO THE ELEC-
TRIC CHAIR!



HORACE HAS FORGOTTEN HOW LATE IT IS, BUT NEVERTHELESS WHEN HE REACHES THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE...

FUNNY! I WAS A FOOL TO COME HERE, SO LATE, BUT THE LIGHT IS STILL ON! MAYBE HE IS HERE, AFTER ALL!

DOCTOR? HEY, ANYONE HERE?

SUDDENLY...

AGGHHH! I-- CHANGING TO WEREWOLF AGAIN! GARRR!

HOW MUCH TIME PASSES HE DOES NOT KNOW, BUT EVENTUALLY, SICK AND DAZED...

I--I DID IT AGAIN! B-BUT NOBODY WAS AROUND, THANK GOODNESS! I D-- DIDN'T KILL AGAIN!

SUDDENLY...

NO! WHO-- WHERE DID SHE COME FROM! DID I--

Y-YES! I MUST HAVE DONE IT! HER-- SHUDDER--THROAT IS TORN OUT! I--I MUST HAVE KILLED HER WHILE THE FIT WAS ON ME, BUT I DON'T REMEMBER IT!

A FEW MINUTES LATER...

I'VE GOT TO SEE THE DOCTOR, TELL HIM WHAT I'VE DONE! HE MUST DO SOMETHING FOR ME! HE MUST! OH, WHY DOESN'T HE COME TO THE DOOR?

YOU! DID IT --HAPPEN AGAIN?

YES! HORRIBLE! YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME, DOCTOR! IT'S AWFUL--I--I'VE KILLED TWO PEOPLE!

A MINUTE LATER IN THE DOCTOR'S STUDY...

I--I KILLED MY WIFE!
THEN I WENT TO YOUR
OFFICE, FORGETTING IT
WAS SO LATE, AND I--
I KILLED YOUR NURSE!
SHE MUST HAVE BEEN
WORKING LATE, OR--
OH, I CAN'T
REMEMBER!

GREAT
SCOTT! YOU'VE
MURDERED **TWO**
WOMEN
TONIGHT!

PLEASE, WON'T YOU
HELP ME! I DON'T
WANT TO BE EXE-
CUTED--OR BE LOCKED
UP THE REST OF MY
LIFE! AND THIS WOLF
MADNESS, I CAN'T
CONTROL IT! I'D BE
BETTER OFF DEAD--
ONLY YOU MUST HELP
ME!

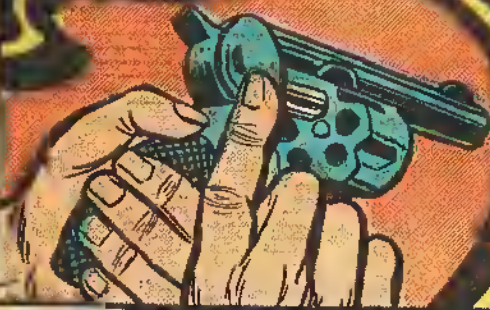
HMM--PERHAPS
YOU'RE RIGHT! BUT
THERE IS A
DIFFICULTY!
ONLY A **SILVER**
BULLET CAN KILL
A WEREWOLF!

YOU COULD DIE MANY WAYS,
BUT YOU WOULD NOT **STAY**
DEAD! YOU WOULD RETURN
TO KILL AGAIN! BUT A
SILVER BULLET WILL BRING
YOU REST AND PEACE!

B-BUT HOW
D-DO YOU
HAPPEN TO
HAVE A SILVER
BULLET?

FOR JUST SUCH OCCASIONS
AS THIS! GOODBYE, MY
FRIEND! BELIEVE ME,
IT'S BETTER
THIS WAY!

UHH--
AHHHH!



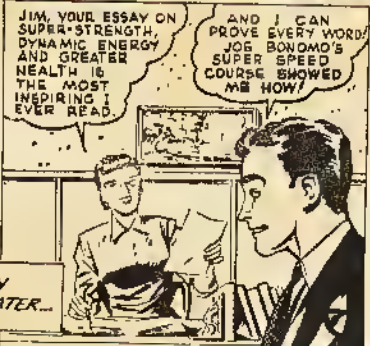
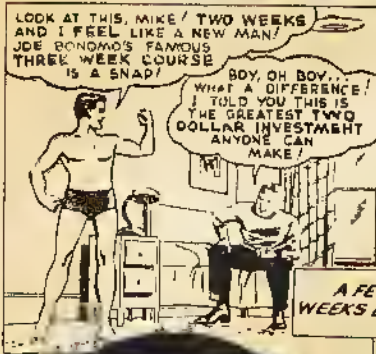
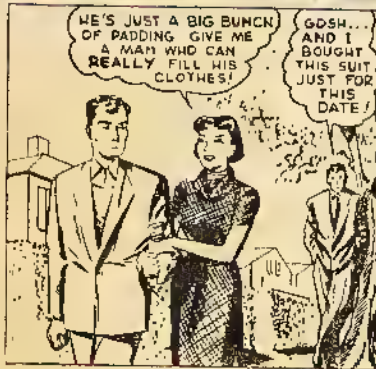
**MOMENTS
LATER...**

POLICE? I'VE CAUGHT
YOUR WEREWOLF FOR YOU!
YES--I HAD TO KILL HIM,
WITH A SILVER BULLET!
HE WAS AFTER ME! YES,
YOU'D BETTER COME
RIGHT OVER! I'LL
EXPLAIN EVERY-
THING!

AT LEAST I'LL EXPLAIN
ALMOST EVERYTHING!
NO USE MENTIONING THAT
I KILLED THE NURSE!
--OR THE OTHER SILVER
BULLET--THE ONE I'M
SAVING FOR MYSELF
WHEN THE TIME
COMES!



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